

## Aim of lesson

To learn the attitude that Christ requires among his followers; that of valuing and forgiving each other.

## Bible background

Matthew 18

## Outline of lesson

### Training

Ask the class if they were the coach of a team getting ready to go to the next Olympics or World Cup, what would they want their team members to do. Bring out from discussion that serious preparation and training would be needed. A coach would not want a team member who was half-hearted or one who did not care about the rest of the team.

Explain that Jesus spent time training his team and teaching them about team spirit, the attitude he wanted them to have towards each other.

### Six Mathematical Riddles

Turn to the workbooks and have the class open their Bibles at Matthew 18. Ask them to hunt through the chapter to find the explanation of the six mathematical clues. As the class go through each part, ensure that they consider what each means in practice and not just identify the mathematical clue. Encourage them to think of practical examples in their own life. Typical answers might be:

Answer	What does it mean?
1 verses 2-4 – the child is considered the least important, but being humble like a child is greater in Jesus' eyes than being someone "important".	Do they like to show their friends at school that they are the fastest, the best, the strongest or the first?
2 verse 5 – receiving a child in Christ's name means you receive Christ.	Do they realise that those who help a lonely one that no-one wants as a friend, are helping the Lord Jesus?
3 verse 6 – losing your life is better than causing a little one to sin.	Jesus thinks it better that you die than that you encourage younger children to do wrong.
4 verse 13 – compare with Luke 15:7 where there is more rejoicing over one sinner who repents than 99 who do not need to repent.	We should care about the one who does wrong too. Not criticise and condemn but try to bring them back to God.
5 verses 15-17 – talk to a brother who does something wrong, just the two of you. This may make a negative situation positive. If he does not listen, take others with you.	This section is also about how to treat someone who does wrong. We should not show him up in front of others but talk to him alone. Only then, if he does not change, should we take one or two more and only if he won't listen to them you should take it to the whole church. The young people should see how the attitudes here apply to them even though Jesus is teaching how to behave as his church.
6 verse 22 – when they are forgiven, their sins are completely wiped out and forgotten, therefore = 0.	Ask them about things they find hard to forgive, even once. Discuss the difficulty of forgiving again and again. Read the parable together. We need to realise how much we owe God in order to help us to forgive others.

### What do you owe God?

Continue with the next part of the workbook and get the to class answer the questions about what we owe to each other and what we owe to God. (e.g. Life, health, food, etc.). Being part of God's team can be tough, discuss briefly with the class how we could all improve our performance and why it is important to do so.

## Digging deeper

### Some parables

This section looks at the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Sheep and the Goats, and the Prodigal Son, and considers how we treat others. The Prodigal Son is covered in Lesson 84, and the Good Samaritan is also mentioned in Lesson 95 (Digging deeper).

### Relevance to our lives

Ask the class to keep a diary this week of things they forgive others for and things they ask forgiveness from God for.

## Prayer

Dear Father, forgive us our sins, and help us to forgive those who sin against us.

## Other suggestions for activities

- The parable of the unmerciful servant is a good one to act.
- The class could write about what happened that day from the point of view of the child in the midst. It could be written when he or she was older and looking back.